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Sinnesphysiologische-Untersuchungen. JULIUS PIKLER, Leipzig: Barth. 1917. Pp. viii + 515.

The title of Professor Pikler's book is misleading. Sensory physiology it is not, nor are many of the investigations experimental. It is not clear from the text, but one surmises that the few empirical observations were, for the most part, made by the author himself without corroboration by other observers, since there is only an occasional reference to a few voluntary subjects.

In the preface the author states that he has called his investigation sensory physiological because his aim is physiological rather than psychological; namely, the determination of objective processes underlying consciousness, rather than a description of conscious states. True, there is no introspection, but the nearest approach to physiology is the constantly occurring phrase "adaptation of the organism."

Professor Pikler's criticisms are aimed chiefly at what seems to him a mechanistic interpretation of consciousness. He has observed, as have also most beginners of psychology, that there is not a one-to-one correspondence between the stimulus and the response. Instead of describing a reaction as conditioned by both the stimulation and the state of the organism as modified by experience, he attempts to show that we have many perceptions which are independent of sensory stimulation.

The general plan is to discuss the various theories explanatory of a particular perceptual phenomenon, to show the weakness of all such theories built upon a sensory basis and then to conclude that he has verified his theory of adaptation. In the last analysis adaptation seems to mean for him mental adaptation. Attempts to discourage strictly scientific and rigidly empirical explanations are unfortunately not infrequent. One is reminded of Dr. J. S. Haldane's attack in *The New Philosophy* upon a physical and chemical explanation of life. After tearing down the scientific understructure Dr. Haldane says, "To the question why living organisms behave as they do, the only answer is that it is a part of the nature of reality that they do so." Indeed, if it were not for the critical examination of contemporary psychology by Professor Pikler one would have, at times, the feeling that one were back in the age of mental philosophy.

As a good example of the author's mental set might be cited his conclusion regarding stroboscopic effects similar to those examined by Wertheimer. Professor Pikler has described some interesting variations of Wertheimer's work and has, in the reviewer's opinion, quite rightly rejected Wertheimer's explanation. His own conclusions, however, are as follows: "There are sensations which have

their origin neither in an adequate sensory stimulation, nor in any other sensory stimulation, nor in experience, but rather in an *a priori*, adaptive, self-preservation tendency which is entirely independent of experience."

Again, in the first chapter Strumpell's theory, that we go to sleep because of the absence of sensory stimulation and awaken because of the presence of the same, is vigorously attacked. Strumpell's patient was anesthetic except in one ear and one eye. When the eye was closed and the ear stopped the patient fell asleep. But, remarks Professor Pikler, what causes him to awaken? No sensations can penetrate the barriers of this almost complete anesthesia. His conjecture is that excess energy, the desire for psychic activity, is so great that the patient moves spontaneously. He opens his eyes, begins to remember, think, *etc.* There is a drive (*trieb*) toward or interest in recuperation which underlies sleep and an interest causes us to awaken.

The other chapters of the book are concerned with the negative judgment, the perception of visual depth, kinematographic perceptions, optical illusions and Ranschburg's phenomenon of retroactive inhibition.

The author apologizes for bringing heterogeneous problems together in one volume. In justification of his plan, however, it may be stated that the problems are held together by a certain similarity of theoretical treatment. The critical historical parts of the book are of more value than the very questionable positive contributions. Throughout, there is that sombre coloring of faculty psychology which so inhibits the enthusiasm of the present-day experimental psychologist. The only American author mentioned is Professor Dewey and his name appears in a quotation.

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JOURNALS AND NEW BOOKS

MIND, July, 1920. *The Importance of the Sensory Attribute of Order* (pp. 257-277): H. J. WATT. - The ordinal attribute of sensory stuff is the foundation of spatial arrangement, and forms a basis for the solution of the problems of recognition, memory, and cognition. *Motives in the Light of Recent Discussion* (pp. 277-294): WM. McDougall. - Contends for the position of McDougall's *Social Psychology* that instinctive tendencies are the mainsprings of activity, against the doctrine of Woodworth in his *Dynamic Psychology* and of Graham Wallas and Hocking. *Some Recent Theories of Consciousness* (pp. 294-313): A. K. ROGERS. - Critical examina-